

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3196
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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 03459

EXDIS

E.O.11652:GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MARR, XF, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE LETTER ON UNIFIL

1. LEBANESE UN MISSION HAS GIVEN URQUHART AND US ADVANCE COPIES OF A LETTER, DATED SEPTEMBER 5, 1978, FROM LEBANESE PREMREP TUENI TO SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT HULINSKY (CZECHOSLOVAKIA) ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIFIL MANDATE. ITS MAJOR POINT IS A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD CONSIDER "THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING A REDEFINITION" OF THE UNIFIL MANDATE TO ENSURE THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF SC RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426, PARTICULARLY OPERATIVE PARA 1 OF 425. OTHER POINTS IN THE LETTER (FULL TEXT TRANSMITTED BELOW) ARE: A) GOL VIEWS AUGUST 30 UNIFIL/GOI AGREEMENT AS POSITIVE STEP PROVIDED IT ENTAILS NO RECOGNITION OF A SPECIAL STATUS FOR THE BORDER AREA OR THE "COMMANDERS" OF THE "DE FACTO FORCES"; B) ISRAEL HAS SYSTEMATICALLY REFUSED TO TURN OVER CONTROL OF THIS AREA TO UNIFIL; C) ISRAEL HAS ACTIVELY OPPOSED THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY AND UNIFIL BY MILITARY, POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC ACTION, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND HAS USED VARIOUS PRETEXTS UNACCEPTABLE TO THE GOL AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO JUSTIFY ITS POSITION AND; D) HADDAD AND SHIDIAC, HAVING DISOBEYED ORDERS FROM THE GOL, HAVE NO AUTHORITY WHATSOEVER TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE LEBANESE ARMY, TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE UN OR TO EXERCISE ANY LEGAL COMMAND IN THE AREA.

2. URQUHART TOLD LEONARD THAT HE IS VERY UNHAPPY WITH THE GOL FOR SENDING THIS LETTER WHICH HE ANTICIPATES WILL CREATE COMPLICATIONS FOR THE EFFORT TO RENEW THE UNIFIL MANDATE. GOL REQUEST TO REDEFINE UNIFIL MANDATE, HE BELIEVES, WILL RAISE NEW QUESTIONS AND DOUBTS IN THE MINDS OF THE TROOP CONTRIBUTORS. AT A MINIMUM THIS WILL MAKE RENEWAL OF THE UNIFIL MANDATE MORE DIFFICULT; AT WORST IT COULD BLOCK THE ENTIRE PROCESS. WE SHARE HIS CONCERNS.

3. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF TUENI'S LETTER TO HULINSKY WHICH WILL BE CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. BEGIN TEXT:

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

- UPON INSTRUCTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON, WE HAVE THE HONOUR TO BRING THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR ATTENTION AND THAT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, RESERVING OUR RIGHT TO URGE FOR A MEETING IF CONDITIONS ARE DEEMED SUCH THAT A DEBATE BY THE COUNCIL BECOMES NECESSARY OR USEFUL.

- 1 - ON THE 31ST OF AUGUST, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON WAS ADVISED THAT UNIFIL COULD NOW ESTABLISH TWO "LIAISON OFFICES" IN MARJEYOUN AND BINT JBEIL, AS CONFIDENTIAL

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WELL AS SOME NEW "UNIFIL POSTS" IN THE BORDER AREA OF SOUTH LEBANON. A GREATER "FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT" WAS ALSO TO BE ARRANGED FOR UNIFIL MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THAT SAME AREA. THESE, AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS WERE AND ARE STILL NEGOTIATED WITH ISRAELI AUTHORITIES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SO-CALLED "DE FACTO LEBANESE FORCES" OPERATING THERE. IF UNIFIL CONSIDERS ITS PRESENT MOVE AS A POSITIVE STEP TOWARDS THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS MANDATE, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON WOULD RAISE NO OBJECTION, PROVIDED NO RECOGNITION IS THEREBY ENTAILED OF A SPECIAL STATUS FOR THE "BORDER AREA" NOR OF THE "DE FACTO FORCES" AND THEIR SO-CALLED "COMMANDERS". IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE MENTIONED RESERVATIONS, THE DISPOSITIONS NOW MADE BY UNIFIL SHOULD BE LOOKED UPON AS MERELY A STEP FORWARD TOWARDS THE FULL DEPLOYMENT OF BOTH UNIFIL AND THE LEBANESE ARMY.

- 2 - AS YOU ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE, THE ISRAELI FORCES, WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO WITHDRAW TOTALLY FROM THE "BORDER AREA" (SOMETIMES CALLED "ENCLAVE") ON JUNE 13, HAVE SYSTEMATICALLY REFUSED TO TURN OVER CONTROL OF THE SAID AREA TO UNIFIL, IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECURITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426 (1978). THIS MATTER WAS TAKEN UP BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL WITH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. IT WAS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL, AND HAS SINCE BEEN THE OBJECT OF EXTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED, BUT TO NO AVAIL.

- 3 - PRESSED BY THE U.N. AND BY GOVERNMENTS OF THE VARIOUS STATES CONCERNED, PARTICULARLY SOME OF THOSE WHO HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE FORMATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF UNIFIL,

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THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON, NOTWITHSTANDING THE VARIOUS OBSTACLES AND DIFFICULTIES, STARTED IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426 (1978). ANXIOUS TO REGAIN FULL CONTROL OF AND SOVEREIGNTY OVER ITS TERRITORY, ASSISTED BY UNIFIL - AS STATED BY THE ABOVE MENTIONED RESOLUTIONS - THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON STARTED TO MOVE UNITS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TOWARDS THE SOUTH ON MONDAY JULY 31ST AND TUESDAY AUGUST 1ST. THE U.N., UNIFIL, AS WELL AS THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WERE ALL DULY INFORMED WELL IN ADVANCE.

- 4 - FURTHERMORE, IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON HAD CONSISTENTLY CONSIDERED - AS CONSIGNED IN THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF JUNE 13 (DOC.S/12620/ADD.5) - "THAT ALL BORDER PROBLEMS SHALL HENCEFORTH BE DISCUSSED WITH UNIFIL AND IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A REACTIVATED ISRAEL-LEBANON MIXED ARMISTICE COMMISSION". A MEETING OF THIS COMMISSION (ILMAC) HAD BEEN HELD, AS REPORTED IN DOC.S12620/ADD.5, ON THE 12TH OF JUNE.

- IN THE LIGHT OF THIS ATTITUDE, AND PRIOR TO THE
MOVEMENT OF FRESH UNITS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY TO THE
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SOUTH, ANOTHER MEETING OF ILMAC WAS REQUESTED AND HELD AT
NAQURA ON JULY 30, 1978 AT 10:20 HRS, DURING WHICH
ISRAEL WAS INFORMED OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT OF 1949 AND WITHIN THE
FRAMEWORK OF RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426.

- 5 - THE DIFFICULTIES THAT HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED BY
THE LEBANESE ARMY DETACHMENT IN ITS MOVEMENT TO THE SOUTH
HAVE SINCE BEEN BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE U.N.
THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS, AND PARTICULARLY UNIFIL COMMAND
AND THE CHIEF COORDINATOR OF THE U.N. PEACE-KEEPING
MISSIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AS WELL AS U.N. REPRESENTATIVES
IN BEIRUT. DUE TO THE HEAVY SHELLING TO WHICH
THE ARMY WAS SUBJECTED TO IN KAWKABA (A POSITION
CONTROLLED BY UNIFIL) ON AUGUST 1ST, WITH THE ENSUING
CASUALTIES AND HEAVY RISKS ENCOUNTERED, IT WAS DECIDED
TO DISCONTINUE MOVEMENT AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED TOWARDS
TIBNINE, PENDING FURTHER ARRANGEMENT THROUGH UNIFIL.
IT APPEARS TO US, AS IT WAS CLEARLY APPARENT TO ALL
CONCERNED THAT ISRAEL WAS ACTIVELY OPPOSING THE DEPLOYMENT
OF BOTH THE LEBANESE ARMY AND UNIFIL, BY MILITARY,
POLITICAL, AS WELL AS DIPLOMATIC ACTION. VARIOUS PRETEXTS
HAVE BEEN EVOKED BY ISRAEL, ALL LEGALLY AND POLITICALLY
UNACCEPTABLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS WELL AS
TO THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT.

- 6 - SINCE THEN, AND PARTICULARLY SINCE AUGUST 18,
EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE
WITH A VIEW TO FINDING THE APPROPRIATE MEANS OF ENSURING
NOT ONLY THE FURTHER DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY BUT
UNIFIL IN THE "BORDER AREA". THE ASSISTANT-SECRETARY
GENERAL FOR SPECIAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS MR. BRIAN URQUHART,
AS WELL AS GENERAL SIILASVUO, CHIEF COORDINATOR OF THE
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U.N. PEACE-KEEPING MISSIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, HAVE
COME TO BEIRUT MORE THAN ONCE WITH THIS FRAMEWORK. DURING
THESE CONSULTATIONS, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON HAS STATED
UNEQUIVOCALLY THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

- A - THAT UNIFIL HAS NOT, AS YET, BEEN ENABLED TO

ENTIRELY FULFILL ITS MANDATE BY DEPLOYING FULLY INTO THE BORDER AREA, THEREBY GUARANTEEING THE "STRICT RESPECT" OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY.

- B - THAT LEBANON HAS REQUIRED, AND IS AGAIN REQUIRING THAT UNIFIL SHOULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO "ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON IN ENSURING THE RETURN OF ITS EFFECTIVE AUTHORITY IN THE AREA", ACCORDING TO OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH 3 OF RESOLUTION 425 AND THE DISPOSITIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL CONFIRMED AND APPROVED BY RESOLUTION 426 (1978).

- C - THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON CONSIDERS THAT ORDERS ISSUED TO MAJOR SAAD HADDAD AND MAJOR SAMI CHIDIAC HAVING NOT BEEN OBEYED, THE COMMANDERS OF THE SO-CALLED "DE FACTO LEBANESE FORCES" ARE NOW TO BE CONSIDERED AS HAVING NO FURTHER QUALITY OR AUTHORITY WHATSOEVER TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE LEBANESE ARMY, TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE U.N., OR TO EXERCISE ANY LEGAL COMMAND IN THE AREA.

- 7 - AS THE MANDATE OF UNIFIL NEARS EXPIRATION THIS MONTH, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON WISHES TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL THAT THE INITIAL SIX MONTHS HAVE NOT BEEN AND MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE

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FULFILLMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES SET IN RESOLUTIONS 425/426 (1978). YET, IT BEING IN THE INTEREST OF ALL

PARTIES CONCERNED TO SEEK THE SPEEDIEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE MODES OF ACTION, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON CONSIDERS IT NECESSARY THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD NOW ASSESS FUTURE POSSIBILITIES OF UNIFIL, ITS ABILITY TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ITS PRESENT TERMS OF REFERENCE, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING A REDEFINITION OF THE MANDATE TO ENSURE THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 425/426 (1978) AND PARTICULARLY THE FIRST OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH OF RESOLUTION 425 WHICH CLEARLY STATES THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL "CALLS FOR STRICT RESPECT FOR THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF LEBANON WITHIN ITS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BOUDARIES".

- 8 - THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON, WHILE BRINGING THIS WHOLE MATTER TO YOUR ATTENTION, LEAVES IT, AT PRESENT, ENTIRELY AT YOUR DISCRETION TO UNDERTAKE WHATEVER ACTION YOU MAY JUDGE BEFITTING. IT IS HOWEVER, WISHED THAT THIS LETTER SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED AS AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND MADE AVAILABLE WHEREVER NECESSARY OR USEFUL.

- 9 - IN CONCLUSION, THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON WISHES TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS PARTICULAR GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BROUGHT ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO US IN THE VERY DIFFICULT AND TRAGIC DAYS WE ARE LIVING, MORE SPECIFICALLY TO HIS EXCELLENCY DR. KURT WALDHEIM, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, TO HIS ASSISTANTS, TO THE COMMANDERS, OFFICERS, AND SOLDIERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORCES, TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF STATES WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TROOPS AND ASSISTANCE TO UNIFIL. THEIR VARIOUS EFFORTS AND THE EFFORTS OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE FIELD, AT U.N. HEADQUARTERS, IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CAPITALS, IN BEIRUT AND IN OTHER CAPITALS CONCERNED HAVE ALL BEEN A TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAUSE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

RESPECTFULLY,

GHASSAN TUENI
AMBASSADOR
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
YOUNG

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